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TRUTH'S PRINCIPLES: 1-3.

Or, those Things about

DOCTRINE AND WORSHIP,

Which are most surely believed and
received by the People of God called

Q U A K E R S,

V I Z.

Concerning the Man CHRIST, his
Sufferings, Death and Resurrection,
Faith in his Blood, the Imputation
of his Righteousness, Sanctification,
Justification, &c.

By a Servant of the Lord,

J O H N C R O O K.

To which is added,

Something concerning the Difference be-
tween the Persuasions of REASON, and
the Persuasions of FAITH.

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T O T H E
R E A D E R.

ALTHOUGH it be allowed by some late adversaries, that we are more sound in the fundamental doctrines of the christian faith than they thought of; yet they persist to object, that we have altered our religion, and that our ancient friends held grievous errors: I am therefore willing, in the eighty - first year of my age, that this following treatise should be reprinted, that they may see what myself with our ancient friends, held in the year 1663.

JOHN CROOK.

Hertford, the 30th of
the tenth. Month,
1698.

A 2

TRUTH



TRUTH's PRINCIPLES :

O R,

Those Things about Doctrine and
Worship, which are most surely
believed and received amongst the
People of God called Quakers.

MANY are the reports that are
abroad concerning this people,
not only as to their practices
and deportments, but also as to their
doctrines and beliefs. The former, time
hath in great measure worn out, as be-
ing the refuge of lies for the ignorant
and unrighteous to flee unto ; and that
stormy and wintry appearance is well
nigh over and gone, because the sun is
so far risen, and the true light so shineth,
that most begin to see, that those reports
were but lies, and scandals, raised as fig-
leaves to cover the nakedness of other
professions, that begun so manifestly to
appear, through the light that shined in
these

these people's lives and conversations. But though the first be gone, yet the latter still sticks with many, as not knowing what they hold, as to doctrine; some saying, "They deny the Scriptures, and the resurrection of the body, and all ordinances, with the man Christ, and his death and sufferings, and imputation of his righteousness, and faith in his blood, &c." Wherefore, for the satisfaction of all that would willingly be resolved, and know the truth as it is in Jesus, I have written this short account of their faith and belief; and, if it were possible, to stop the mouths of clamorous tongues, before sentence be given against them by some signal stroke of the Lord from heaven, which he will undoubtedly in his appointed time, reveal and make manifest, to the trembling of all hearts concerned therein, and tingling of all ears that shall hear thereof; when it shall be said unto them, "The holy shall be holy still, and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still." Rev. xxii. 11.

We believe, that the God of all grace hath given a measure of grace, or
some-

Some manifestation of his spirit, and the light thereof, unto all men, according unto these scriptures, John i. 9. Tit. ii. 11. 1 Cor. xii. 7. Neh. ix. 20. and experiences of all men, who, at some time or other, do feel something in their hearts and consciences, that doth lust against the flesh, and the flesh against it ; and that these two are contrary the one to the other ; one lusting after evil, which is evil, and the other after good, which is good ; the one carnal, the other spiritual ; the one from the earth, the other from heaven, Gal. v. 16, 17.

We believe, by this gift, grace, and inspiration of the Almighty, man only can come to know the true God truly ; what he is, and how he works in the hearts and consciences of people, to regenerate them, and make them bear his image, according to 1 Cor. i. 19, 20, 21. Luke x. 21. and the experiences of all that were regenerate and born again.

We believe, that all the errors and mistakes about God, and the things relating to his kingdom, sprung and arose from

from men's wandering from this gift of God, into their own imaginations ; whereby, though they thought themselves wise, yet they became fools, and erred, their foolish hearts being darkened, according to Rom. i. 21, 22. not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God, as it is written, Mat. xxii. 29.

We believe and know, that this gift and grace of God appears in and unto all men, that all may be without excuse ; accusing for the evil, and excusing for the good, according to Rom. ii. 15, 16. shewing unto man what is good, and reproving of him in his own conscience for the evil, whether thoughts, words, or deeds ; and that this reproof of instruction is the way of life, Prov. vi. 23.

We believe that as the true God, and eternal life, is known only by the light of this gift and grace, according unto the scriptures ; from which light and spirit of God came the scriptures, both of the old and new testament, as it is written, 2 Pet. i. 21. so can they only be read, as truly to be believed, fulfilled,

filled, and practised, in the light and power of the same ; and all that are out of this spirit, must needs be ignorant and unlearned in the apostle's sense, " who wrest the scriptures to their own destruction," as it is written : for Peter and John were unlearned men outwardly, not knowing letters ; but inwardly read in the knowledge of this light and spirit of God, and wrested not the scriptures, Acts iv. 13. 2 Pet. iii. 16.

We believe, according to the scriptures, 2 Cor. iv. 3. that wheresoever the power of God is not known within, there the " gospel is hid and unknown unto them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not ; lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," and God should heal them ; because it is only by the light of Christ, the power of God, that the creature comes truly to see himself in his lost and undone state ; from which sight ariseth a true sense in the heart of the creature, that makes him cry

B out

out on his wretchedness, by reason of the body of sin and death ; which necessitates him to look out for a Saviour, whom God manifesteth, in and by the same light that “ shines in the heart,” on purpose “ to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,” God’s image, whereby God healeth the soul. And therefore doth the Devil, the god of the world, strive so much by the gifts of the pleasures, profits, vanities, and lusts that are in the world, which he presenteth to men and women now, as he did to Christ, in the days of his flesh; when he shewed to him all the world with its glory ; which glory is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life ; whatever may make this life happy (as it were) in the things that may pride it, or lift it up to sit as queen : and as men and women take and receive these gifts from the god of this world, their minds are blinded ; because they believe not in the light, which sheweth them the vanities of all the gifts of the god of this world ; which gifts, the Devil knows (if they be received) will so blind the minds of
them

them that receive them, that they will not come to be sensible, in the true light, of their lost conditions, so as to cry unto God from the deep and true sense ; for then God, out of the depths of his love and mercy, could not but heal them. And therefore, lest the true light should shine into them, to give them the sensible knowledge of themselves, and God should heal them, the Devil, as god of the world, by the things of this world, endeavours to blind the mind (not the brain knowledge, but the heart-feeling sense within, in the mind) lest the light within should so shine, as God should heal them. And all the bustlings of Satan, with his gifts, are but to blind the mind within, lest God should heal the soul, that complains to him from the true sight and sense of his misery as in himself.

By this grace and gift within, we believe, that to us (though in the world there be lords many, and gods many) there is but one God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, witnessed within man, only by the Spirit of truth, that manifests both the Father and the Son ;

and these three are one, and agree in one ; and he that honours the Father, honours the Son that proceeds from him ; and he that denies the Spirit, denies both the Father and the Son, and is antichrist ; but he that believes in the Spirit, and is led by it, is a Son of God, Rom. viii. 14. “ As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.”

We believe the scriptures bear witness unto, and testify of Christ : but they say, “ the witness of God is greater than them ; the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the sons of God ;” for it is not the scriptures without the Spirit, nor the Spirit contrary to the scriptures, but the Spirit’s discovering the will of God in the heart, or opening of the scriptures in its own time and way, and not in or by the will of man, but as itself pleaseth (who searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, and manifests them unto the soul) which giveth the perfect, sound, and saving knowledge : for, said Christ, “ The Spirit shall take of mine, and shew them unto you.” And as
holy

holy men gave forth the scriptures, 2 Pet. i. 21. so holy men, and they only, come truly to understand them ; and not proud or ungodly men ; because their hearts and lives do not answer the hearts and lives of those that gave them forth, as face answereth face in a glass. And this we believe to be the reason, why so long preaching, by men of corrupt minds, who have and do handle the words deceitfully (for selfish ends and filthy lucre's sake) hath brought forth so little fruit, and been to so little purpose, except to their purses and bellies ; for had they believed, and therefore spoken, and stood in God's counsel, they should have profited their hearers. Jer. xxiii. 21, 22, 23, to the end.

Through this gift we believe, that Christ Jesus, the Son of God, was manifested in the flesh, in the fulness of time : and this we know by the same Spirit, by which our fathers believed he should come, and Abraham saw his day ; by the same do we believe he is come, and do see his day ; as also by the writings of the prophets and apostles ;

files ; which two-fold cord is not easily broken.

We believe also, according to the scriptures of truth, that “ this same Jesus hath God highly exalted, and given him a name above every name, that whosoever believes in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life ;” and that there is not another name whereby man can be saved, than this name of Jesus Christ ; nor is remission of sins to be preached by any other name. But as we do not believe, that the outward letters and syllables are that name, that is to be bowed unto by the outward knee ; no more than the letters or syllables in the words God, or Spirit, seeing the scripture saith, “ Unto God,” who is a Spirit, “ every knee shall bow,” Isa. xlv. 23. but that name which saves, is the power and arm of God, that brings salvation from sin, and makes every soul that names it to depart from iniquity. This is that name which was preached, and which is preached, through faith ; in which name, remission of sin is obtained : therefore was the outward word Jesus
given

given him, as his outward name ;
 “ Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for
 he shall save his people from their sins : ”
 [Mark] “ for he shall save,” &c. So
 that which saves, is the name which is
 to be believed in, which is that arm of
 God that brings salvation, “ when no
 eye pities, neither is there any to help.”
 The power of God that then saves, is
 that grace that comes from the fulness
 of Christ the Saviour : and without
 this virtue, Christ Jesus are but empty
 names ; 1 Cor. xii. 3. “ No man can
 say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the
 Holy Ghost.”

We believe also, that this Jesus died
 for, or because of, sin ; and rose again
 for the justification of those that believe
 in him, as well as to manifest to all
 the world, that he was the Son of God ;
 and that he thereby “ spoiled principa-
 lities and powers, and triumphed over
 them openly, and led captivity captive”
 in his own person. And we believe and
 know, by his grace in our hearts, that
 as his name Jesus without virtue and
 power, is but an empty word ; so his
 dying, without man’s conformity to his
 death,

death, or being planted into the likeness thereof, or being crucified with Christ (as saith the scripture, Rom. vi. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Gal. ii. 20.) will not profit man, as to the salvation of his soul, no more than the naming of his outward name [Jesus] doth at this day make people to depart from iniquity. For we believe, and are sure, that man must die inwardly, as well as Christ died outwardly, and must be put to death in his flesh, as Christ was in his : for “ he that is in the flesh cannot please God,” Rom. viii. 8. neither cease from sin ; but “ he that is dead, is free from sin, Rom. vi. 7. And yet man’s dying unto sin, and the root and principle of it in himself, is so far from making void Christ’s death in his own person, that it establissheth it to all those ends and purposes, for which it was intended of the Father. As the cures which the physician doth, manifest and establish his skill and ability ; so doth man’s dying unto sin and self, and living unto God, manifest and establish the virtue and power of Christ’s death : for as man manifests his being risen with Christ, by his seeking the things that are above,

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Col. iii. 1, 2. so doth he manifest his knowledge of the death of Christ, by his "being crucified with Christ, and bearing about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus." For as it is not an outward belief, gathered from the letter, that will change the heart and life, (though it may the judgment and opinion) so is it not a belief from the history, or letter only, that can give man a saving knowledge of the death of Christ; but he must have the same glory and power of the Father, in measure, working in him there, to beget faith in his heart, that he may believe unto salvation, viz. a being saved from his own filthiness and righteousness, as well as confess with his mouth, Rom. x. and must have that Spirit in him, quickening his mortal body, as well as believe that it was in Christ, and raised up him from the dead, Rom. viii.

II. And this man whoever he be, bond or free, that thus believes the death of Christ, and its satisfaction to God, as well as its usefulness to man, cannot make it void, or divide it and its virtue upon the soul that thus knows it; but will say, Here is a dying man

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witnessing

witnessing the death of Christ, and nevertheless the same man living with Christ ; and concluding, if Christ had not died, man must have perished in his sin : this being the way appointed by God to recover him, whereby he knows Christ, and him crucified, and what the preaching of the cross of Christ is, which is “ foolishness to them that perish, but to them that are saved, the wisdom of God, and the power of God,” 1 Cor. i. 18.

By this gift of God in our hearts, we further believe, that Christ Jesus rose again from the dead, according unto the scriptures, and sits at God's right hand, in a glorious body, and we believe, that our low estates and humbled bodies shall be “ made like unto his glorious body, through the working of his mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself ; and that this mortal shall put on immortality. For though we believe, that Christ Jesus hath enlightened every man with his light, whereby man may come to know himself lost and undone, as before is said ; yet every man is not
therefore

therefore saved, though the grace that appears to all men is sufficient in itself ; but some have the grace of God bestowed on them in vain, not liking to retain God in their knowledge, though something within them shews them what is good ; but they reject the counsel of God within, or against themselves, to their own destruction, Luke vii. 30. (see the margin.) And yet it doth not follow, that the grace is insufficient of itself, no more than it follows, that Christ's death is insufficient, because he tasted death for every man, and yet every man is not saved. Neither doth regeneration, or the believing in the light of Christ within, make void the death and sufferings of Christ without at Jerusalem, no more than believing the scripture - testimony without, concerning Christ's death, makes void the work of regeneration and mortification within ; but as the apostle saith in another case, so say I in this, " For as the man is not without the woman, neither is the woman without the man in the Lord ;" even so is not the death and sufferings of Christ without, at Jerusalem, to be made void and of none

effect by any thing within ; neither doth the light within make that of none effect without, but both in the Lord answer his will. For though there is, and may be a knowledge and belief of what Christ did and suffered without the gates, in his own body upon the tree, and yet sin alive in the heart, and the work of regeneration not known ; yet it cannot be so where the light within is believed on, and obeyed, so as to have its perfect work in the heart, to regenerate and make all things new, and to be of God ; man, in this state, can never make void what Christ hath done and suffered without. And yet this new birth, or Christ formed within, and dwelling in the heart by faith, doth not limit or confine Christ to be only within, and not without also ; but both within and without, according to the good pleasure of the Father to reveal and make him known : for, “ he fills all things, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him ; ” and yet is he at God’s right hand, far above all heavens, in a glorious body.

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And we also believe the resurrection of the just and unjust ; the one to salvation, and the other to condemnation, according unto the judgment of the great day ; and then shall every seed have its own body, according to 1 Cor. xv. 36, 37, 38, which we verily believe : “ for if the dead arise not, we are of all men most miserable.” But because we dare not be so foolishly inquisitive, as to say, With what bodies shall they arise ? therefore do some say, we deny both the resurrection of the body of Christ, and of all that are or shall be dead : but this also is false ; for “ every man shall be raised in his own order ; but Christ the first fruits.” 1 Cor. xv. 23. And we believe, they shall be raised with the same bodies, so far as a natural and spiritual, corruptible and incorruptible, terrestrial and celestial can be the same.

We further believe, according to the scriptures, concerning faith, that that faith is only true, which is God's gift, and hath Christ Jesus, the power of God, for its author and object, and is distinguished from the dead faith, by
its

its fruits : for though in description and definition they may carry a resemblance, yet in nature they are as different as a living man is from one dead, which wants not form or shape, but life and power. So saith the apostle James, "As the body without a spirit is dead, so is faith without works ;" even so is that faith which stands in the wisdom of words, and not in the power of God. By the one, man is kept in captivity to the world, and the things of it ; but by the other he hath "victory over the world," 1 John v. 4. and the seal and witness thereof in his own heart, whereby it is purified, and God is seen ; for the "Pure in heart see God," Mat. v. 8. This faith differs men now, and their worships, as it did Cain and Abel ; for, "by faith Abel offered up a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," Heb. xi. By this living faith, Abel saw beyond the sacrifice, unto Christ, the first-born of God ; beyond the firstling of the flock, which he offered, and therefore God had respect unto Abel and his offering ; but God rejected Cain and his offering ; though he had faith to believe it to be his duty, yet sticking in the form, and
not

not flying on the wing of faith unto Christ the one offering, he missed the mark ; as all have done ever since that have gone in Cain's way of worshipping, as well as killing men about worship. But we believe that faith to be only true and saving, that flies over self-righteousness, as well as filthiness, unto the fountain of life in Christ ; which faith hath nothing of man in it, but is as the breath of life, by which the soul lives ; not a bare assent to the truth of a proposition in the natural understanding, but the soul's cleaving unto God, out of a naturalness between Christ and the soul ; and so lives rather by relation, than bare credit, or desperate adventure and hazard ; not looking at its doing to commend it, but God's love and bounty in Christ the Light, to receive it ; and yet holiness is his delight, and he can no more live out of it, than the fish upon the dry land.

We believe, that this faith keeps the mind pure, the heart clean, through the sprinkling of the heart from an evil conscience, by the blood of Jesus, which remits the sin, and justifies the soul,
through

through the virtue of his blood received into the heart by this living faith, which receives all its power and virtue from Christ, in whom it abides as its root and object ; whereby justification is witnessed from sin, and not in sin, Rom. vi. 22. “ But now being made free from sin, and become servants unto God, you have your fruits unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

We believe, that justification and sanctification are distinguished, but not divided : for as he that sanctifieth and justifieth is one, so do these go together, and when the soul hath the greatest sense of justification upon it, through the virtue of the blood of Jesus by the living faith, then is it most in love with holiness, and at the greatest distance from sin and evil. And whenever there is a failing in sanctification, there is also some eclipse of justification in the eye of the soul, until faith hath recovered its strength again, which is lost by sin's prevailing. For as the farthest and clearest sight is in the brightest day, so is it with the soul, when it is most in the brightness and beauty of holiness ;
its

its justification appears most glorious, and its union and communion most sweet and lasting ; and so, like two twins, as they are much of an age, so they are like one to the other : “ What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.”

We also by this light believe, that acceptance with the Father is only in Christ ; and by his righteousness made ours, or imputed unto us, not by creaturely skill, but by the applicatory act of God’s gift of grace, whereby the soul feels the difference between self applying by its own faith, and God applying by his Spirit, and so making Christ unto the soul, “ Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.” So that we believe, and are sure, that there is a great difference between imputation, as it is the act of man’s spirit, and as it is the act of free grace, without man’s forcing. And so we distinguish between imagination and imputation, between reckoning or imputing that which is real, and reckoning or imputing that which is not real, but a fiction and imagination in the creaturely will and

D power.

power. And because we are against the letter, we are clamoured upon, as if we denied the imputation of Christ's righteousness ; when it is only unto those that are not made righteous by it, " to walk as he also walked" : for, as the scripture saith, it is not he that saith he is righteous by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, but " He that doth righteousness, is righteous, as Christ is righteous," 1 John iii. 7. he that believes otherwise, is deceived. And yet it is not acts of righteousness, as done by us, nor as inherent in us, as acts, by which we are accepted of God, and justified before him ; but by Christ, the author and worker of those acts in us and for us, whereby we know that we are in him, and he in us, and we hold him as our head ; into whom all things are gathered together in one, even in him.

We further believe, that God only is to be worshipped ; and not any likeness that man makes unto himself of God, from any view, sight, or knowledge that he hath had of him ; but in every act and service, man is to know what substantially,

substantially, as well as who speculatively or notionally, he worshipping, as it is written, John iv. 22. "Ye worship ye know not what ; we know what we worship ; for salvation is of the Jews." And he that thus worships the Father, honours the Son by the same Spirit, which is One with the Father and the Son ; in which God's Spirit only is worshipped, according to the form of its own chusing, and manifesting of itself in and by, according unto the good pleasure of the Father, who is a Spirit, and limits man unto the Spirit's form ; but allows no man to limit the Spirit unto his form, though it be not of his inventing originally, but of the Father ; yet man must no more limit God unto it, than he could command God to appear in it at first : for as he chose it himself, so hath he reserved liberty to leave it at his pleasure, " who works all things after the counsel of his own will, which he hath purposed in himself," that the gift of the knowledge of the mystery of his will might for ever be acknowledged to be of his grace, and from the riches of the glory thereof, according to Ephes. i. and man

be bound, but God free ; man bound to wait in the light for God's movings ; but God free to move in whom, to what, and when he pleaseth. Then man is to go, when he saith Go ; and to come, when he saith Come : and such servants do serve him ; and then there is no more curse, as in the days of " will-worship and voluntary humility, but the throne of God and of the Lamb," Col. ii. 18. 23. Rev. xxii. 4. " and they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads."

We believe also, that this worship is spiritual (and not carnal) in all its parts and ordinances, and not to be imposed by any outward force, but performed by the inward leadings of God's Spirit, according as the holy men of God were led and guided in the days past, who gave forth the scriptures ; all impositions of worship outward being only enjoined under the first covenant, that made nothing perfect, until the time of reformation, spoken of Heb. ix. 10. But Christ being come, there is an end as well of such impositions, as of the meats and drinks, and divers baptisms,
and

and carnal ordinances, they being all but temporally, and in order unto an end ; but all to vail to Christ, the sum and substance of all, [the first] pointed at by all, and [the last] ending of all, the Amen. And he that thus worships God in Christ, his ordinances are spiritual, not carnal, and his faith carries him beyond his works, with righteous Abel, and preserves him, that he is not drowned in the form like Cain ; neither falls he short of the glory of God, nor of his assurance of acceptance with him.

We believe there is one baptism necessary unto salvation, Eph. iv. 5. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." And this baptism is spiritual, of which John's water was but a figure, John i. 31. "That he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water," saith John. And 1 Pet. iii. 21. "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." This one spiritual baptism into the name of Jesus Christ, is that which
saves ;

saves ; the water being but a figure,
 that Christ might be manifest to Israel,
 who had divers baptisms imposed on
 them, until the time of reformation ;
 but Christ the substance being come,
 the shadows flee away. And yet, where
 ever any believe they are commanded
 now by the same Spirit that command-
 ed the believers to be baptized in the
 days past, either for the furtherance of
 the gospel, or trial of their faith, we
 judge them not : but this obedience is
 very rare to be found ; and we could
 heartily desire, that all would consider
 seriously, whether literal sayings, ob-
 served only by outward reading, hear-
 ing by the ear, or inward impulses
 upon the heart by the divine power,
 are the motives unto obedience in this
 kind. And if honesty and uprightness
 of heart may be heard, we believe and
 know, the many dead souls every where,
 notwithstanding their baptisms, will be
 as so many witnesses against them, by
 their grovelling upon the earth, as so
 many men slain and killed by the letter,
 while the Spirit's quicknings have not
 been known in the true baptism into
 death. For we find by daily experi-
 ence,

ence, that most men and women live like Pharaoh's lean kine, only to eat up the fat, and to envy those that are not so lean soul'd as themselves.

We believe also, that as there is one true saving baptism, so is there one bread and body of Christ, which all the saints do feed upon ; and though they may be many, as to persons, yet their bread is but one, and they all in it but one bread. And this we believe is the flesh that came down from heaven, John vi. 33. though the outward Jews now, as then, murmur at him, because he said, " I am the Bread which came down from heaven," verse 41, 42. But Christ, (verse 45.) to stop their murmuring, tells them, that the knowledge of this mystery was only revealed unto them whom God (and not man) teacheth : and no more than are taught of God, can set seal and subscribe unto this truth in Jesus. Though we believe also, that Jesus did take outward bread, and break it, and gave it to his disciples, as the scripture saith ; and this was a figure of his body that was to be pierced and broken upon the tree,
and

and a shew, to shew forth his death until he came. And we believe he did rise again, and appear unto his disciples : “ And all that believed were together, and had all things common, &c. And they continued daily with one accord in the temple, breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all people,” Acts ii. 44, 45, 46, 47. And we believe that the apostle, in 1 Cor. xi. 20, saith true, where he saith, “ When ye come together therefore in one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s supper :” and all that he speaks in that chapter is not to perpetuate that outward breaking of bread, otherwise than as the believers did, that were “ filled with the Holy Ghost in singleness of heart,” as before is said ; and yet we judge not those who break outward bread, and drink outward wine, being in a belief they are commanded so to do, to put them in remembrance thereby of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, by the Remembrancer, the Spirit of truth, which is appointed by the Father to lead into all truth. But to do it by imitation or
tradition

tradition only (as most do it, if not all at this day) we know it is not an offering unto God in righteousness; neither do we believe this to be the communion of the body and blood of Christ; and yet, the eating of the flesh and drinking of the blood of Christ, we believe man must know and witness, or he hath no life in him, John vi. 53, 54, 55. and we believe that many are striving now in their spirits, as the Jews did, vers. 52. saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" And not only the Jews, but many of his disciples said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" verse 60. And at verse 63, he tells them, "It is the Spirit that quickens, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." And he that hears and understands these words that are spirit and life, will not be offended at what I have spoken of the flesh and blood of Christ.

By the same spirit and grace we believe, that prayer is an ordinance of God, when performed by his spirit, in its words (and not those which man's wis-

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dom

dom teacheth) or without words, by sighs and groans which cannot be uttered, and these so often as the Spirit itself pleaseth : but the form without the Spirit, whether it be by words of other men's framing, or words of a man's own spirit, according to his will, time, and manner ; that is not the prayer which prevails with God. And we believe there is none so weak and infirm, but this Spirit proffers its help at some time or other, though man regardeth it not ; and the more man's mind is gathered within from all visibles, the more he comes to be sensible of the movings and stirrings of this Spirit, in its secret cries to God, answerable to the wants of that man or woman, in whom it moves and cries. And by the due watching thereunto, we believe and know the Spirit of prayer and of adoption that cries unto God, comes to be discerned and distinguished from a man's own spirit and will.

... We believe by the same gift of Grace, that there are several ministrations, and several operations, according to 1 Cor. xii. and all by the same Spirit, as before
fore

fore the law, and after the law by Moses, and after by John the Baptist, and Christ and his apostles ; and in all these the ministration had acceptance with God through the management of the Spirit, and had its rejection and dislike of God for the want thereof. And by this Spirit were the scriptures given forth, and holy men of God did speak, prophecy, preach, and pray, as they were moved ; and for want of it, the letter did and doth kill. And for the further appearance and pouring out of the Spirit, answerable unto this work and service that God had for them to do, they were to wait, as Christ commanded his disciples to do at Jerusalem, to “ receive the promise of the Father :” for, by this Spirit, he that speaks, speaks as the oracle of God. And therefore, as it was the practice of the people of God in old time, to wait for the moving and stirring of the Spirit, that they might speak as it gave them utterance, in the evidence and demonstration thereof ; so do this people (called Quakers) now ; and according to its moving in their hearts, they minister, according to the signification

of the Spirit, whereby they understand both what and when to speak, and when to be silent ; as also, who they are that minister and speak in their own wills, above the cross of Christ, which the apostle was careful always to be in subjection to, lest he should make it void, by speaking the words which man's wisdom teacheth ; and therefore as the saints did, so we do believe, and therefore we speak ; and such preaching and speaking in faith, as well as praying in faith, is acceptable unto God as his worship, and not otherwise.

And we further believe by the same Spirit, that the sum of all religion, according to truth, and the signification of the word religion is, man not at liberty in his will, but bound again unto God, by his having given to him, by the light of Christ within, the true sight and knowledge of himself, as lost and undone for ever ; and from this sight, a true sense to arise upon and remain with him ; from whence spring unutterable groans and cries unto God, under the weight of the burthen and wretchedness, by the reason of the body of sin
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and death ; and then when there was none to help or pity in this state, then is mercy shewed in Christ the arm of God, which is revealed as an help, neither seen, nor known, where, how, or when to come at it, or meet with it : and this begets in the heart of the man or woman, in and unto whom it is thus revealed, thanks and praises unto God, for this gift and revelation of his Son, in this needful time, whom the soul sees to be the gift of eternal love.

And we believe and know, upon this love and faithfulness of God is founded, built, and established, the everlasting covenant (whereby not only all men may be saved for its ability, but some shall be saved because of its prevalency) which is not like unto the covenant which he made with our fathers. And although all mankind is not saved, yet it is not because either of insufficiency in this covenant, or because of the weakness of the grace that appears in and unto all men ; but because of man's will loving death, and chusing his own delusions, whereby his destruction is of himself, and God clear of his blood,

blood, in the free tender of his grace, gift, and striving of his Spirit within him. For we know assuredly, according to the scriptures of truth, and experience of all souls that ever were truly converted to God, that though by grace man is saved, not of himself, but by the free gift ; yet as the old world did, and those rebellious Jews spoken of, Acts vii. who, as did their fathers, so did they, always resist the Holy Ghost ; so do men now. And yet in the tender of this grace, and striving of his Spirit, the Lord is a God so hiding himself in the management of this striving, and ministration of his Spirit, as if it wholly depended upon man's choice and consenting, that man's will, as to him, is (as it were) free in rejecting or accepting, life and death being set before him ; whereby in the wisdom of God, the propensity of his nature, as it came out of the hands of his Maker, hath an advantage, by this dealing of God, to put forth itself ; so that man is as free in the choice, as he is in the refusal of the tender of mercy and help, and that with an equal indifferency, as it appears to him in this state ; notwithstanding

standing afterwards in the further growth in this grace and knowledge of Christ, he sees clearly and convincingly, that the grace (that wrought hiddenly from his sight and knowledge in the first working, tender, and ministration of God towards him) gained its consent through its own prevalency in the love of God ; by which sight and sense, self comes to be abhorred, and the free love so admired, that he knows from first to last, all was of grace, and that free ; that self is not able to challenge any thing as due from what it had done, but all of gift ; and yet, as before, with such an equal indifferency on man's account ; so that God may and will appear to be just, both in condemning and saving, and the Justifier freely of all that believe in Jesus, the Light of the world.

Therefore, let all take heed how they dislike this ministration of God, and striving of his spirit in their hearts and consciences, under colour and pretence of its insufficiency ; and therefore they will not come to him, because his drawings and strivings are not so strong

strong as they would have them to be, looking for such an overpowering and irresistibleness, as they are not able to withstand and gainsay ; lest such perish through a wilful neglect, and for want of stretching out their hand, when the Lord holds out his ; and so they perish in the ditch, with a vain expectation of further power, or cry in their mouths, Lord have mercy upon us ; and so with the sluggard, while they cry, " Yet a little more slumber and folding of the hands to sleep, their garden is overgrown with weeds, and their backs cloathed with rags, and they beg in harvest ;" whilst others that have sown in tears, not fainting, do in due time reap in joy ; and not despising the crumbs that fell from the table, nor the day of small things, witness the presence of their Beloved come down into his garden, and walking among the lilies.

Let these things be truly considered, pondered, and weighed in the true balance of light and righteousness, lest any soul perish through the false weight and measure ; so shall my soul rejoice
that

that any have escaped the net of the fowler, through the discovery of the true light, and God have all the glory, unto whom alone it belongs, and man ashamed, confounded, his mouth stopped, and he laid in the dust for ever; and then shall my end be answered in writing these things.

JOHN CROOK.

F Concerning

Concerning PERSUASIONS in
MATTERS OF RELIGION.

THERE is the natural man, and the spiritual man ; and there are persuasions of each in and about matters of religion. There is the persuasion of reason, and the persuasion of faith.

The persuasion of reason is that belief which man receives into his mind or heart, from the exercise of the reasoning faculty : and this persuasion in matters of religion is but man's opinion or judgment, which, how certain or infallible soever it appear to him, yet may be shaken by a demonstration or evidence of an higher kind and nature.

The persuasion of faith, is that belief, which the new creature receives into the renewed mind, from the evidence and demonstration of the spirit, which openeth and manifesteth the things of the Spirit, unto that mind which is begotten and renewed by it. And this persuasion is certain and infallible, however it may be struck at and battered by
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the reasonings of the wise, earthly part, even in that very man, whose heart is thus persuaded, by the light of the Spirit of God, concerning the things of God's kingdom.

Now the lowest persuasion of faith is higher, and of a more noble nature, than the highest persuasion of reason; because faith is of an higher principle, and of a deeper nature and ground, than man's reason is. But this (because it appears not in man's sphere, but rather out of it, and is contrary to the line and reach of his wisdom) is accounted by him foolishness and madness.

Thus is the wisdom of God, and the children thereof, judged and condemned by man is his day. And how can it be otherwise? how can the wisdom of man but judge that as foolishness, whose beauty and excellency is hid from its eye? But this is, because the wisdom of man is out of its place, not subjected to the wisdom of God, but exalted above it: therefore, as a curse unto it, is it suffered to lift up itself in its conceitedness against, and so to persecute,

secute, the pure wisdom of God, and the birth thereof, that it might fall, and be broken, and snared, and taken, and its day deservedly come to an end, and be shut up in the shadows and chambers of eternal darkness.

But what ear of man can hear this ? surely none that is whole in the line of man's wisdom, reason, and understanding ; but that alone which is bruised, broken, and in some measure dashed to pieces, by the inroads of a divine life and nature. This in the leadings of that life which hath broken it, and in the shining of the light eternal upon it, and into it, may be enabled to take up the cross to the natural part, and to die that death with Christ, which preserves from the second death, with the misery thereof.

Happy is he, who knows and hearkens to the persuasions of God's Spirit, who is born of God, and taught to wait upon him, and worship him in spirit, who receives his religion from the light of faith, into the renewed nature and mind, and not from the reason of man,
into

into natural understanding, which is easily corrupted, and cannot be kept pure, but alone by the indwelling of the principle of eternal life in it.

For though such may suffer very deeply in this world, from the men of this world, as the subjects and servants to the principle of life have done in all ages and generations; yet their principle will bear them out, in which God will appear to strengthen and refresh their spirits, and carry them up above all their sufferings, in the patience, meekness, and faith of the Lamb. And keeping to their principle, they cannot be overcome, but must either live or die conquerors, according to the will and good pleasure of him who ordereth and disposeth of all things well, and bringeth good out of every evil, in despite of all the powers of darkness. And he that overcometh (whether by life or death) in the Lamb's Spirit, shall wear the Lamb's crown, and sit down in that perfect rest in the kingdom of the Father, which will give the hearts of all his children full satisfaction. In which assured hope (life stirring in our bosoms,

bosoms, and quickening our hearts with love unto our God, and zeal for his truth) we can freely give up all that is near and dear unto us in this world, and lay down our heads in inward peace, in the midst of the greatest outward persecution and trouble. Even so O Lord ! thy will be done concerning this generation of thy people, whom thou hast begotten to thyself, and brought forth by thy mighty power, to testify to thy truth in this present day. Dispose of them as it pleaseth thee, and let not their faith in thee, nor thy faithfulness to them, fail, but let them be a praise to thy name throughout all generations ; and tendered by thee as the first-fruits of thine appearance, in the glorious light of the everlasting day, after this great, long, thick, and dark night of apostacy from the life and spirit of the apostles, which hath so long eclipsed and covered the brightness of thy beauty from the sight of the earth !

ISAAC PENNINGTON.

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